

Appl. No. 09/980,383
Amdt. Dated September 2, 2003
Reply to Office action of May 1, 2003

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-32 (cancelled)

Claim 33 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material for use in a system for transferring fluid, the fluid transfer material comprising an open, porous structure provided by:

at least one cured thermoset material, which is in a chopped, shredded or fragmented form; and

at least one thermoplastic material, which is in a chopped or shredded form, mixed with, and melded thereto, the thermoset material;

~~characterised in that there is sufficient thermoset material to create an open structure of the fluid transfer material.~~

Claim 34 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim 1-33, further comprising at least one fibrous material, ~~of which, together with the thermoset material, there is sufficient to create said open structure of the fluid transfer material wherein said thermoplastic~~ material is mixed with and melded to said fibrous material.

Claim 35 (cancelled)

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Claim 36 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~4-33~~, wherein at least one said thermoset material comprises rubber.

Claim 37 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~4-36~~, wherein said rubber is from recycled tyres of motor vehicles.

Claim 38 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~2-34~~, wherein at least one said fibrous material is selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of straw, wood and an inorganic material.

Claim 39 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~4-33~~, wherein at least one said thermoplastic material is recycled.

Claim 40 (cancelled)

Claim 41 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~4-33~~, wherein said fluid transfer material is at least partially surrounded by netting, preferably a fine mesh net.

Claim 42 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according claim ~~4-33~~ further comprising at least one selected from the group of mica and vermiculite.

Claim 43 (previously presented): A fluid transfer system comprising:
a conduit for carrying fluid; and

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a fluid transfer material according to any of the preceding claims, the fluid transfer material cooperating with said conduit for transferring fluid thereto and/or therefrom.

Claim 44 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to claim ~~41~~43, wherein said conduit is a gutter arranged in use below an elongate length of said fluid transfer material.

Claim 45 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to claim ~~41~~43, wherein said conduit is an elongate pipe having means for enabling passage of fluid between the interior and exterior thereof and said pipe being at least partially surrounded by an elongate length of said fluid transfer material.

Claim 46 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to claim ~~43~~45, wherein said means for enabling the passage of fluid between the interior and the exterior of the pipe comprises at least one aperture in the pipe.

Claim 47 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to claim ~~43~~45, wherein said means for enabling the passage of fluid between the interior and the exterior of the pipe comprises at least one slot arranged in the upper part of said pipe in use.

Claim 48 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to claim ~~43~~45, wherein said means for enabling the passage of fluid between the interior and the exterior of the pipe comprises said pipe being porous.

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Claim 49 (currently amended): A fluid transfer system according to ~~any one of claim 41-43~~, wherein said system is used for one selected from the group comprising drainage and irrigation.

Claim 50 (currently amended): A method of making a fluid transfer material comprising the steps of:-

mixing together chopped, shredded or fragmented components of at least one thermoset material, optionally at least one fibrous material, and chopped or shredded components of at least one thermoplastic material to form a mixture;

placing said mixture in a mould; and

heating said mixture so as to cause the melding of said at least one thermoplastic material to the other materials, ~~there being sufficient thermoset material, and fibrous material when present,~~ to create an open structure of the fluid transfer material.

Claim 51 (currently amended): A method according to claim ~~48-50~~, further comprising the step of preheating said mixture before it is placed in said mould.

Claim 52 (currently amended): A method according to claim ~~48-50~~, wherein said mixture is heated by the introduction of a heated gas into the mixture.

Claim 53 (previously presented): A fluid transfer material for use in a system for transferring fluid, the fluid transfer material comprising at least one fibrous material mixed with and melded to at least one thermoplastic material.

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Claim 54 (currently amended): A fluid transfer material according to claim ~~4~~33, wherein said material is formed by an extrusion process.